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The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 5 November 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to draw your attention to the latest incident of Palestinian terrorism directed against the citizens of Israel.

At approximately 6 p.m. (local time) yesterday evening, a Palestinian suicide bomber approached a crowded shopping centre in the Israeli city of Kfar Sava. An alert security guard spotted the terrorist and moved to intercept him, at which time the terrorist detonated a large quantity of explosives packed with metal objects in order to maximize the pain and suffering of the victims. The blast killed the security guard along with one other Israeli, a 15-year-old boy. Nearly 70 others were wounded in the bombing, including a number of children. The terrorist was identified as a resident of the Balata refugee camp. The terrorist organization Islamic Jihad, based in Syria, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Israel holds the Palestinian Authority fully responsible for yesterday's attack, and for all terrorist attacks emanating from Palestinian territory. The Palestinian leadership has manifestly failed to live up to its obligations to end suicide bombings, which are crimes against humanity, along with all other acts of terrorism, as required under signed commitments reached with Israel and the resolutions of the Security Council, in particular resolution 1373 (2001). Nor has the Palestinian Authority taken any steps to implement resolution 1435 (2002), which demands an end to all acts of violence, terrorism and incitement, and calls for those responsible for terrorist acts to be brought to justice. Nor has the Palestinian leadership taken any steps to cease its financial, logistical and moral support for acts of terrorism and the direct involvement of those under the authority of Chairman Arafat in their perpetration.

Israel further holds the Government of Syria responsible for yesterday's bombing in the light of its ongoing support for terrorist organizations, including providing them with safe harbour, as well as financial, logistical and political support, in defiance of Security Council resolutions, including resolution 1373

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(2001). Based in the Syrian capital of Damascus, Islamic Jihad is an organization committed to the destruction of the State of Israel, that has claimed responsibility for scores of terrorist attack against Israelis, including suicide bombings, and that receives logistical support and assistance from the Syrian Government. Rather than condemning suicide bombings, these crimes are praised by the Syrian regime, and their perpetrators celebrated and glorified.

In the absence of any Palestinian action that might prevent acts of terrorism, Israel is compelled to take measures to protect its citizens from the unrelenting threat of Palestinian terrorism. It is vitally important that both the terrorists, as well as their supporters, be held fully accountable for these grave crimes.

Israel calls on the international community to condemn in the strongest terms suicide bombings and other criminal acts of terrorism, as well as the ongoing support and involvement of the current Palestinian leadership in such acts. Only an end to the heinous campaign of Palestinian terrorism, with its terrible cost in Israeli and Palestinian lives, can restore hope of achieving a lasting settlement between Israelis and Palestinians.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism that began in September 2000.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as an official document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 160 and 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative